25X1 CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL 25X1 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ACLNCY INFORMATION REPORT COUNTRY Latvia DATE DISTR. 4 Apr 1953 SUBJECT Gauge-Changing Practices for Latvian Railroads/ NO OF PAGES Industry in Lieraja PLACE ACQUIRED NO. OF ENCLS 2 (LISTED BELOW(Encl "A" & "B") 25X1 DATE SUPPLEMENT TO ACQUIRED 25X1 25X1 DATE OF INFORMATION THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION 25X1 the practices of gauge-changing wheels on Latvian freight cars and locomotives did not cause excessive sideway motion. The reason was that 25X1 the only change was a relocation of the wheel on the axle /see enclosure (A)7. The bearing surface location in a gauge-changed wheel and axle assembly did not change with respect to the frame of the car. The riggings, of course, were adjusted in respect to the new positions of the wheels. 3. Gauge-changing of wheels on locomotives ras usually determined by the 25X1 construction of the frame. Although often encountered great difficulties, quite a number of locomotives were changed to the USSR five-foot gauge. 4. The hydraulic press used in gauge-charging in 1943-1944 was not of special construction but a regular press which was used for assembly and disassembly of axle and wheel sets. This type of hydraulic press was used commonly in all Latvian repair shops and in several of the new axle and wheel factories. Perhaps there is new equipment in use for gauge-changing at present. The greatest extent of gauge-changing to the USER five-foot track occurred during the 1940 Soviet occupation of Baltic States and in certain parts of Poland and Rumania. 5. Greatest difficulties encountered in the three-rail arrangement were at crossings and at switches. Actually, the only success with the three-25X1 rail system was on long straight lines. Even then some functions of this system required constant attention. 25X1 CONFIDENTIAL **CLASSIFICATION** DISTRIBUTION

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6. The Liepaja Locomotive and Freight Car Repair Shop employed about two thousand persons who worked in the following departments:

- (1) Locomotive -- (Mounting and Assembly Shop, Boiler Shop, and Tender Shop)
- (2) Freight and Passenger Car -- (Carpenter Shop, Sheet Metal Shop, Paint Shop, Glass and Upholstery Shop)
- (3) Internal Combustion Engine -- (Tracked Motor Car Repair Shop and Tracked Motor Car Genstruction Shop; small Foundry; Machine Tool Shop; Axle, Wheel, and Tire Shop; and Manometer and Gauge Construction and Repair Shop)
- 7. The plant's capacity during normal times was 20 locomotives and 40 to 50 freight cars per week. This quota was hardly ever met. The plant regularly performed general heavy, medium, and light repairs on locomotives and the necessary repairs on freight, passenger, and tracked motor cars. It also produced certain sheetmetal and forging parts which were necessary for miscellaneous railroad repairs and for placing and joining of rails on tracks.
- 8. During the summer of 1944, when the Soviet Army approached the borders of Latvia, the Germans evacuated much of the plant's machinery and equipment to Breslau-Odertor, Germany. During this evacuation of machinery, a Soviet air raid on the area damaged and destroyed same of it. According to information from other Latvian refugees who left that area at a later date, the Latvian Locomotive and Freight Car Repair Shop is in full operation again; but I have no idea as to the extent of its output and efficiency.
- 9. There was no concentration of the engineering industry in Liepaja. Smaller and less important firms had their engineering problems handled by "Tosmare", "Drasu Fabrika", and the Liepaja Locomotive and Freight Car Repair Shop. Public utilities in Liepaja, in addition to asmall thermal plant, consisted of a new thermal power plant, an older thermal power plant which generated direct current, and a gas producing plant. There was no municipal water plant in Liepaja, but each of the three largest industries had its own water plant.
- 10. The importance of petroleum storage installations was of a local point of view_For location of tank farms, see enclosure (B).
- 11. There was no machine construction on any considerable scale in Liepaja. Of course, the three large plants mentioned above tuilt many special machines for their own uses. Additional manufacturing plants in the area were an ore process plant, a safety match plant, a leather processing factory, a shoe manufacturing plant and several lumber yards. In the food manufacturing industry there were: a sugar refinery, a pork and fish canning plant, and several steam-powered flour mills. The freight yard in Liepaja served as a storage yard for the southwestern part of Latvia. The passenger station was of only local importance.
- 12. Total labor forces of the following factories were:
 - (1) Liepaja Locomotive and Freight Car Repair Shop -- 2000 employees
 - (2) The Drasu Fabricka (now called "Kraeny Metallurg") -- 2500 employees
 - (3) Tosmare Ship Yards -- 2000 employees

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ENCLOSURE	(A):	Sketch	of gauge-changing device	
ENCLOSURE	(B):	Map of	Liepaja Showing Location of In	dustries with Legerd

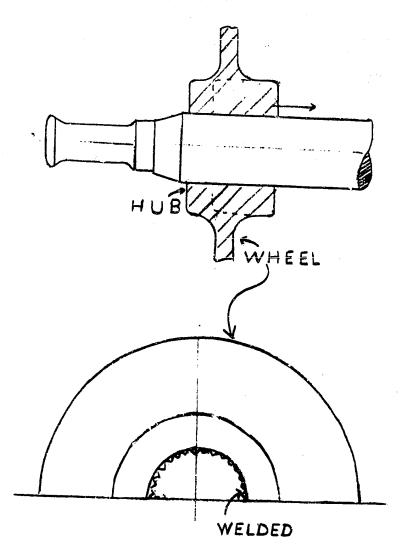
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